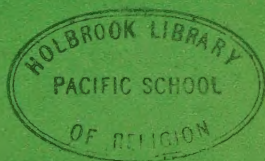


SOCIAL

ACT-ION



I SEE AMERICA PREPARING

By

DWIGHT J. BRADLEY

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In the year 1865, the last year of the Civil War, Walt Whitman composed a remarkable poem—*Years of the Modern*. Its prophetic insight clarifies the issues of today, for it is one of those poetic creations which reveal historic meanings that underlie the whole trend of an epoch lasting for generations.

It may be helpful to recall the circumstances under which Whitman wrote this poem. The bloodiest war in all history up to that time was finally drawing to its close after five frightful years. One entire section of the country was on the verge of military defeat, political anarchy and economic collapse. The other section was becoming arrogant, self-righteous and vengeful. Its success in war was soon to bring forth the spirit of the carpetbagger and the money-loving pharisee. In revenge, there was to develop the spirit of reprisal and hatred symbolized by the Ku Klux Klan. Abraham Lincoln, the only political leader who carried in his heart sufficient magnanimity and in his head sufficient sagacity to deal with the situation on any constructive terms, was soon to be assassinated. The Christian churches were in no state of mind to be helpful, for they had been divided on the war issue, bitterly divided in regard to the leadership of Lincoln, and were now about to lend themselves almost without a single moral scruple to the sanctification of industrial greed and the spiritual justification of social practices which the ethical judgment of mankind had, for thousands of years, set down as basically and essentially evil.

How strikingly similar this is to the situation today. Simply extend the area to be covered by the indictment from North America to the whole world, and the sorry picture seems the same. Bloody war, political anarchy, economic collapse, arrogance, hatred and greed seem in the ascendancy. The picture is the same. Yet in 1865 Walt Whitman dared to hope.

It is the general purpose of this article to bring forward the

signs of health and hopeful possibility in the present situation of America: not in a spirit of banal secular optimism which disregards the evils that prevail on every hand, but in a spirit of Christian realism which, seeing and recognizing the evils, is yet certain that on the whole and in the large our times will prove to be times of ethical growth and tremendous social advance rather than merely an era of meaningless moral decadence and social disintegration.

Christian Imperatives

There is a level of prophetic and Christian faith and realism, which can take in at one view both the desperately evil and the grandly good aspects of this or any other situation. Ours must be the religious look; and yet even so we should thank God and take courage from the reports brought us by large-minded persons of secular wisdom, when these reports bear out our own religious understandings of the state of things. So, while we look to the Bible rather than to Whitman for our basic conceptions and interpretations, we are thrilled by Whitman's obvious reflection of what we know to be the essentially religious and biblical point of view. For we aspire to find in the present historic situation whatever aspects of providential hope and spiritual opportunity there may be, as revealed to the eye of religious faith by the Bible, by the Inner Light and by practical experience in the realm of human service.

It was never the habit of Christians to let despairing pessimism rule their conduct. It is not the part of Christians now to let disillusionment betray them into apathy. There is a certain kind of pessimism (and this is the Christian kind) which is a spur to creativity. There is a kind of disillusionment which serves to make Christians more aware than ever of the simpler and sounder realities which their Utopian dreaming had obscured. Such pessimism and such disillusionment are now in order. Out of them may come creative achievements based on a new sense of values and implemented by intelligent planning.

The title of this article, "I See America Preparing," taken

from Walt Whitman's poem, points the way to the analysis and interpretation of the whole expanse of American life and activity at this present time. For America *is* preparing. It is preparing for defense, but for far more than defense. It is preparing to help eliminate totalitarian tyranny from the world, but for far more than that. It is preparing to become a highly organized modern political-economic entity, capable of playing a leading part in international affairs. But it is preparing for far more even than that.

America is preparing for the fullest possible participation in an era of social reconstruction and revision on a planetary scale such as, perhaps, has never before been imagined except by the ancient Hebrew prophets and by poets like Walt Whitman. "This incredible rush and heat, this strange ecstatic fever of dreams O years! Your dreams O years, . . ." It is for full participation in all this that America is now preparing.

Few if any of us have realized how enormous and powerful are the forces in modern civilization which were making for anarchy and destruction. We for the most part believed that by merely reforming some of our American evils we might be able to build a new America. We were largely optimistic as to the possibility of patching up the tattered shreds of the post-Versailles international system and of making it do for an indefinite future. We did not recognize that in America it was not reform that was called for, but something more drastic than reform. Likewise we did not see that the old international system was outworn and that an entirely new form of international relationship had to be devised and established.

Now, most of us are beginning to realize these things. We see that America must be redeemed and not merely reformed. Its soul must be saved in order that its body may be truly healthy. We know also that a new form of international relationship is bound to emerge from the anarchy of the present hour. We dare to hope that it may be a relationship painfully and painstakingly constructed by the persons and groups in all nations who have good will, social intelligence and the courage of pioneers.

Let us define our terms. Social reform leaves the same old spirit and the same old basic practices intact, only purging them sufficiently to make them fairly decent and respectable. Redemptive social action takes the old attitudes and the old practices apart, eliminates the unsavory elements, introduces new and healthful ingredients, and puts together the constructive attitudes and the healthful ingredients in such a form as to be actually new, actually different, actually of a fresh design.

Take, for example, a situation in a large modern mass production plant. Relations between management and labor are unhealthy. Management tends to bulldoze labor. Labor tends to sabotage management. Labor is resentful of what it considers unfair treatment, low wages, long hours, arbitrary attitudes, undemocratic practices. Management is suspicious of labor's attitude, employs spies, sets up its own private police force, refuses to discuss labor's demands. This is a bad situation but it is not untypical.

To reform this situation management takes the lead in bettering conditions. A company union is formed under management auspices. Workers are encouraged to bring their grievances to a newly appointed personnel director. Improvements are introduced in the shops, with new safety and sanitary devices. A fine cafeteria is installed and a trained dietician is employed to provide good meals. A recreation center is set up, and teams are organized in various sports. The company even goes into the housing business and builds attractive and modern flats, apartments and bungalows. Group insurance plans are developed. Profit sharing is instituted. The play of a keen imagination is seen at work in the whole plant. It would seem as if the situation had been totally changed. Such a program of sweeping reform should, one might suppose, solve all the major problems.

But one day a strike breaks out in this plant. Despite all the efforts made by management to face conditions and improve them, the workers are not satisfied. They have doubts as to the freedom to bargain offered by a company sponsored union. They resent the paternalism of the new program. It does not seem

to them that the program really represents their own interests. They suspect management of installing these "gadgets" for ulterior reasons, perhaps only to keep the workers contented so as to get more work out of them. They would prefer to choose their own way of spending their leisure time. They would rather organize their own teams. They do not feel comfortable in the company houses and wish only for enough income to rent or buy homes of their own outside the company grounds. The profit sharing scheme fell to the ground during the depression and few care to revive it. The personnel director seems to them to be a kind of company stool pigeon, a "smoothie," a person to be on guard against. The more friendly he acts the more suspicious the workers become. They know that he reports regularly back to the main office. They suspect that his reports would bear scrutiny.

Then the workers hear of the possibility of organizing a union of their own. They get together in small groups. Meetings are held. Workers sign up and the movement spreads through the plant. Finally, a workers' committee calls upon the management and presents its demands. They want a union shop. They insist that the company union be dissolved and that the new independent union be recognized as the sole bargaining agent. They ask for more wages and shorter hours. They mince no words for they have suddenly commenced to feel their strength.

Management refuses these demands. A strike is called.

After a long and bitter struggle in which violence has broken out and hatreds have been generated, a government representative steps in. Conferences are held. They seem at first to get nowhere. But gradually, through the insistent patience of the government representative, certain points of agreement are uncovered and accepted. At length the conferences take on a more businesslike atmosphere. Bitterness and hatred dwindle to hostility and resentment, which in turn give place to a kind of good humor and a grudging mutual appreciation. Finally, as if of a sudden, the representatives of management and labor, with the

government man sitting in, arrive at a first agreement. This is clinched and recorded. Soon other agreements emerge. The strike is called off. It is publicly announced that a settlement has been reached which is moderately agreeable to both sides. Work is resumed. The shop is now organized. Habits of collective bargaining begin to form themselves. In a fairly short while these habits have become traditions. No one ever thinks now of questioning the new relationships. Production goes on from this point under democratic auspices; for labor and management have learned through costly but valuable experience how to co-operate in a common project.

This is an example of the difference between social reform and social redemption. Superficially it may not seem that the second method bears any resemblance to what we, in religious terms, have been accustomed to think of as redemption. But nevertheless it does. For redemption is the introducing of a new creative element—in this case, the element of democratic organization and bargaining—into the old situation after the old situation has been broken up, taken apart and purged by forces which aim at fundamental change. It happens that in the illustration chosen the redemptive action was seen at work in the relations between management and labor. It might just as well have been seen at work in the relations between a husband and his wife, or between a teacher and her pupils, or between whites and Negroes, or between nations. The principle is always the same. It is in fact the very principle which God invoked when, in order to redeem mankind—after reform had obviously failed—He let man's whole personal and social life commence to fall to pieces before sending His Son as the new factor to transform man's old life into one that was fundamentally new.

The process by which social redemption may be effectuated is a combination of personal and sociological change which goes under the general title of "social action." All human action, of course, is social as well as personal. But when the term "social action" is used it usually means *social change*. When this social change is merely reformative it takes place only on the super-

ficially social level, but where it is redemptive it takes place in the hearts and minds of the persons and groups that are affected as well as in the institutions and practices of society. It changes the motives and the objectives of people as well as the ways in which they live and work and carry on their affairs. It alters the underlying "patterns of interaction" of civilization, and this in turn alters the modes and methods by which the underlying social patterns are put into outward effect. It changes the "psychology" of individuals and communities, whereupon this changed "psychology" shows itself in the radically different manner in which the individual and community order the ordinary relationships of social existence.

A council or committee for social action when established by a church or church group is, obviously, set up to initiate and help carry on processes of social redemption in cooperation with all other forces in society which, too, are devoted to the tasks of social redemption. Such is the Council for Social Action of the Congregational Christian Churches under whose auspices this magazine is published. Its reason for existence is the belief that social change is necessary, and that such social change as is necessary should be undertaken by those persons and agencies who see the necessity for more than the mere reform of human institutions and for more than the outward alteration of certain outmoded social practices.

Social action as we envisage it now must, therefore, be redemptive. All that we do must have this end in view, if the "new America" which we will be helping to create, is to be really new, really "unperform'd." The new world order in which we will help America to participate to the utmost of all its resources, once the forces of tyranny are overcome, must be founded on modern applications of the ancient principles of justice, mercy, honor and respect for truth.

The gigantic struggle now going on is a world-wide struggle for some new equilibrium of the social and economic forces which so largely shape the character of human existence. It is

a struggle for some new global economic structure that can function within the new political-world-order which sooner or later must emerge beyond the present conflict.

Moreover, the peace which is to follow the favorable outcome of the present struggle must not be a peace concluded between absolutely sovereign and self-seeking states. It must either organize itself around a system of limited national sovereignties seeking the welfare of all, or else become simply the terrible pause between the present conflict and some future (and possibly even more degrading) cataclysm.

The stake of Christianity and the Christian Church in the outcome of the war and the organization of the peace, is far greater than the average church member yet realizes. It is not merely a matter of "beating Hitler," although until Hitler is out of the way no just or durable peace is quite conceivable. It is not merely a matter of a European settlement, nor of the domination of the whole world by Anglo-Saxon nations. It is not at all a matter of "returning to normalcy," afterwards—for the only "normalcy" to return to now is the "normalcy" of unemployment, depression, the futile struggle for markets, trade-destroying tariffs, huge armaments, mounting taxes, and the constant fear that some new aggressor will arise and in desperation precipitate another war.

Meanwhile, however, we must keep in mind the relation of the struggle within America to the broader issues that are involved in the vast struggle of mankind as a whole. For America must so shape the day-by-day course of its internal development in these critical months and years as to be prepared for unlimited participation in the fateful tasks to be undertaken on a planetary scale when again totalitarian tyranny has been eliminated from the lives of men and the destinies of nations.

This article makes no attempt at detailed analysis of past mistakes and future possibilities. It only sketches a general background, and indicates specific areas in the foreground where men and women who work together to build a redeemed society can perfect the details step by step.

THE HOME JOB

Social Pioneers

The pioneer is typically American. He and she were created to carry across this continent the outposts of a rising culture. Pioneering in the nineteenth century meant to leave the old home place and strike out for places dreamed of but unknown. It meant the covered wagon, the trek over plains, "Pike's Peak or bust," fighting off the Indians, death on the desert for many, life in the mining camp or the ranch house for many more, and new homes in rough surroundings for all who had courage and strength to see it through.

When the West was finally settled, when the railroads were an old story and concrete strip highways were becoming a commonplace, when dude ranches came in and cowboys were hired to ride horses to impress the dudes—that is, when America had commenced to shake down into a fixed mould, a new set of pioneers had appeared. These were the industrial workers imported from Europe, the farm laborers brought over from Asia and Mexico. These were the new pioneers.

Now this second wave of pioneering has subsided. The industrial workers and immigrant farm laborers have become part and parcel of America. They still are struggling for their rightful place in American life, but their struggle is an accepted part of American life. More and more they receive support and sympathy from the children of the older pioneering age. What they now have to do is only to consolidate their gains and to perfect their organization within the fabric of the new organic democracy that is emerging from the breakdown of rugged individualism.

Does this mean, then, that the call for pioneers has ceased? Has the era of pioneering ended? Far from it. There is always a call for pioneers, and every era is an era of pioneering—that is, if so be that it is a living era. The pioneer is the life-seeker

of civilization; the one who keeps civilization from dying of *arterio sclerosis*.

The pioneers of the present time are not called to a trek across the plains, deserts and ranges. They are not drawn from their former homes to become the toilers and builders of a vast industrial civilization, the backbone of a new kind of agriculture. They are being called, rather, to explore the possibilities of making this vast industrial civilization human and humane enough to become the dwelling place for sensitive personalities.

The job of the contemporary pioneer is to show how this can be done with a minimum of violence and a maximum of peace, with a minimum of anger and a maximum of good will. His job is as difficult as was that of the covered wagoners and of the immigrants who came by steerage—as difficult and as vital. He will have opponents, sometimes he will have enemies. He will run into obstacles that sometimes make necessary a long detour. But notwithstanding he must go on. The destiny of America was decided once by those little companies who set out toward the West. It was decided a second time by those Wops, Dagoes, Hunkies, Micks, Greasers—these were some of the names we called them—who have finally commenced to give the American Dream new meaning. It will be decided a third time by those persons and groups from amongst our own composite American breed who already, out of sheer good will and social conscience, are beginning to lay foundations for a democracy which is not only organic but friendly and humane.

Pioneering is not a job to be carried on by blue print and precise measurement. Social planning—which is the more technical term for contemporary pioneering—involves experimentation, adaptability, the method of trial and error, or as someone has put it, “of monkeying and success.” Karl Mannheim precisely defines social planning as being “foresight deliberately applied to human affairs, so that the social process is no longer merely the product of conflict and competition.” But this foresight is not like the foresight of the mathematician or even of the engineer. It is the foresight of the prophet, the poet, the

lover, the householder, the laborer and the experimental scientist, all rolled up into one.

Foresight Applied to Human Affairs

Soon after the Great Depression began we commenced to hear and read about the necessity for a "planned society." It had become clear that the unlimited freedom of enterprise and the ruggedness of uncontrolled individualism which characterized the nineteen twenties were out so far as a highly organized industrial civilization was concerned. The question was then and is now as to what kind of society should be planned for—and who should do the planning.

There can be little doubt that the New Deal took up the task of developing a program of social planning at a time when this was critically necessary. Even those most antagonistic to the New Deal—to its leaders and advisors and to the measures it installed and the methods by which it installed them—for the most part admit that "something had to be done" in 1933 and after if this country were to escape a paralyzing economic and social catastrophe.

Since the beginning of the New Deal, America has been in an almost continuous ferment of political and economic experimentation, controversy, and discussion. During the same period, also, the Nazi regime has established a totally planned society in Germany and has set out to install the same kind of social planning in every part of the world. Russia has been experimenting in a somewhat different way. Sweden, Denmark, China, and the nations of the British Commonwealth have all, with greater or lesser rapidity and in varying ways, been going through a period of peaceful revolution. Thus, between 1933 and now, independent movements towards a new order of society, based upon modern industrial production and scientific techniques, have been developing momentum.

In order to be able to resist, repel and finally remove the aggression of the Nazi type of planned society, Great Britain and America have had to organize a gigantic program of military

defense. In the United States, this has required a speed-up of the general program of social planning inaugurated in 1933 by the New Deal. It shows itself most clearly in two distinct areas: the taking out of civil life in peacetime of more than one and one-half million young men yearly for military training, and the almost arbitrary relocation of hundreds of thousands of industrial workers and their families for defense production.

Perhaps we have not yet realized that this vast defense program may be the prelude to a modernized "planned society" in America—the first clumsy steps towards a truly redemptive social movement. But it is so. For it means not only the reorganization by government of the lives of millions of young men in training camps, and the relocation of thousands of families in new and sometimes newly created communities. It also means "priorities"; that is, the governmental control of the production and distribution of goods and services. And, as a step to avoid inflation, it means price fixing and the governmental establishment of wage and profit levels. It means crop control on the farms and the rigid control of speculation and installment buying. It means the curbing of the use of gasoline and other commodities by private individuals. It means that a substantial portion of the income of many families will be taken up by direct or indirect taxation. It means that individual enterprise must be largely diverted into channels that are approved by public opinion through legislation. It means that "rugged individualism" must transform itself or be transformed into organic democracy.

Organic democracy, to put the matter simply, is that kind of social order in which the deep spiritual relationship which abides between personalities at the profoundest psychological level is expressed in social forms that bind individuals into a constructive and functioning unity. It is different from individualistic democracy in just one essential way: in the latter the chief incentive is personal profit and success, in organic democracy the chief incentive is the welfare and success of the total community. In individualistic democracy the great objective

is to "keep up with the Joneses." In organic democracy it is helping the Joneses, the Smiths, the Jabloniskis and the O'Haras to keep up with each other. Organic democracy comes far closer to the basic Christian conception of society than does individualistic democracy; just as individualistic democracy came closer to the Christian standard than did feudalism with its caste system and its political-ecclesiastical tyranny. Redemptive social action, therefore, must find its present field of activity just here: at that point and in those places where fundamental alterations in human incentives and ideals are accompanied by drastic changes in the structure of political economy. These alterations in incentive and idealism are going on quite patently today amongst the youth of America just as amongst the youth of all countries. At the same time, radical changes are coming to pass in the political economy of America as in that of every country on earth. In other words, individualistic civilization is giving way to an essentially different kind of civilization. Christian social action must have a part in this.

To accomplish this transformation, however, without falling into the hands of a rigid bureaucracy or coming under a dictatorship will not be easy, although to do so is the chief task and most challenging opportunity of our time. As Ralph Barton Perry is quoted as saying (*Time*, July 14, 1941), "The problem of a democracy is how to be total without being totalitarian." For this, indeed, must America prepare.

Living Space for Minorities

The place of minorities in an individualistic democracy is like that of small patches or lumps of alien matter in a large mass of predominant material. They may be tolerated or thrown out according to the wish of the majority. They are regarded as being, at best, a harmless abnormal ingredient and, at worst, to use Hitler's expressive although non-democratic characterization, "a leaven of decomposition."

The defense and protection of minorities in an individualistic democracy is provided for by laws governing their rights, priv-

ileges and status as tolerated or specially sanctioned groups. In the passage of such laws the majority has, of course, the conclusive word. No minority in an individualistic democracy has a place in society which cannot be challenged and disestablished by the majority. Its position is granted out of either apathy, tolerance, a desire to exploit its members, or (at the other and better extreme) unselfish good will.

The security and well-being of minorities in an individualistic democracy come to depend, in the last analysis, upon the constant unselfish vigilance and effort of those in the majority who feel a sense of responsibility for the welfare of the minorities. This is true whether the minorities happen to be *racial*, *political*, *religious* or *economic*. These are always potentially at the mercy of the majority; so that unless the majority can be influenced or led by those of its members who are animated by a desire to sustain and encourage the minorities, there is bound to be an anti-minority tendency at all times. The task of the churches in an individualistic democracy, together with all organizations specifically established to defend minority rights, is to keep pounding away at the majority in behalf of the various minorities, and to see to it through careful scrutiny of all legislation and close contact with the courts that the laws governing minority relations in every aspect are enforced, and that, wherever necessary, new laws are passed.

While this method has proved its limitations, it has nevertheless worked fairly well. It must be admitted that the position of most *racial minorities* in an individualistic democracy such as that of the British Empire and the United States has been, in the main, more advantageous and less painful than in societies of a strictly non-democratic type. Jews have for generations received fair treatment in Britain, although anti-Semitic prejudice has never entirely disappeared. The same is true in the United States, although race prejudice in America breaks out more fiercely from time to time than in Britain. We Americans fought a Civil War less than a century ago over the status of Negroes in the States. The war ended slavery but it did not end Negro

repression and discrimination. There has not yet arisen among the majority of United States citizens a movement of fair-dealing towards the Negro sufficiently powerful to rid the country of its anti-Negro blight.

These Jewish and Negro minorities are not, however, all. Other racial groups have suffered their turn of repression and discrimination: the Irish, the Italians, the Poles, the Chinese and the Japanese. Some of these have finally achieved a status with which they are fairly well content. Others have simply let themselves be swallowed up by the majority, by intermarriage and by adopting the habits and viewpoints and even the names of the dominant groups. Others still endure their lesser position with passivity, having long since lost their illusions as to this "land of the free and home of the brave."

Political minorities have fared rather well in individualistic democracy so long as their platforms and programs did not seem to be a real threat to the *status quo*. Yet rarely in the United States has any political minority, except the chief loser ("the loyal opposition") in the big two-party elections been able to participate effectively in political activity.

Religious minorities in America have passed through periods of persecution alternating with times of relative tolerance. But the tension has been great at all times, breaking out at intervals in such sporadic tornadoes of hatred as the notorious "A.P.A." and the Ku Klux Klan. The latest appearance of such intolerance has come with the current persecution of the "Jehovah's Witnesses," and the tendency in certain quarters to bait religious conscientious objectors.

Economic minorities in an individualistic democracy have probably suffered most. Much of the repression of the Negro has been economic in origin and effect. In an individualistic democracy it is the tacit assumption that the controlling majority of citizens will be either of middle and upper-middle class rating and affiliation or bound to the middle and upper-middle class by ties of obligation and sympathy. This has been the fact at most times. The result has been that unorganized groups of

disadvantaged persons have been forced to accept the dregs and cast-offs of democratic society. Sharecroppers, farm laborers, miners, and industrial laborers of every category—all these have "done without" as a matter of course while the standard of living of the middle and upper-middle class rose with ever-increasing acceleration. The dominant majority has been unwilling to share voluntarily with the minorities.

Since, however, these minorities have commenced to organize amongst themselves, thus making themselves an actual working majority, the situation has changed remarkably.

In an individualistic democracy the position of the labor union is that of a fighting minority, out to win its rights. But in an organic democracy its position would be different. The labor movement in an organic democracy would be a tremendous functional or vocational movement, the chief business of which is to represent within total society every person and group engaged in productive labor of any sort. It would be no longer a fighting organization, but, rather, a creative organism. Although the strength of the labor movement in the United States still is partly spent in the struggle for decent wages, improved conditions and bargaining power, it is putting increased energy into the development of technical skills amongst its members; schools for adult education in labor standards and social relations; the building of a sense of solidarity amongst all who labor for community ends, and collaboration with all other agencies and organizations within society which foster a rich, humane and personality-building culture.

The labor movement, taking in a growing number of persons and groups hitherto belonging to the "underprivileged" classes, has thus far forced the previously dominant majority to yield many rights, privileges and increases in income which could never have been procured without organization. Thus, in a prophetic manner, organized labor has commenced to pave the way from the individualistic democracy in which the unorganized worker had no recourse other than to submit, to the organic democracy in which the worker, like every other member of

society, will receive, as a matter of legal right, full access to the products and advantages of modern industrialized civilization.

The change from individualistic to organic democracy is already under way in America, although the movement is hardly past its first halting stages. Hitler has meanwhile taken up the challenge to individualistic democracy and has attempted to foist, by chicane and by force, his perverted substitute for organic democracy upon the world. Nazi society is organic in theory. But it is not democratic. Its very nature is to betray the legitimate desire of all humane and democratically-minded persons for a modern type of democracy fit to supersede the outmoded and crumbling individualistic democracy which finally failed to solve even the basic problem of unemployment. Hitler offers the deluded masses a dreadful panacea: Nazism is Hitler's desperate answer to the cry of the exploited and expropriated minorities for a place in the sun. Organic democracy is the answer of America to this same cry.

Sense of Community

Never before in all history have there been so many uprooted persons on the face of the earth. This is due largely to the wars in China and Europe, but not entirely so. Modern industrialism has also uprooted its millions; and the wandering hordes of migratory workers all over America attest to the fact that the deep "sense of community" by which people's souls are fortified has become impossible to great sections of our agricultural population. How can they have any "sense of community" when, like the Joads, they must leave their homes, flee like refugees to a distant region, and find when they have arrived there that, by no possibility, shall they be able to establish themselves in new homes?

All over the world the Lord of history is treading out the grapes of wrath. It is a terrible chastisement, and those who suffer most are those who seem to be most innocent.

Wherever democracy still remains free, there the uprooted may hope to find welcome, help and an opportunity to become

part of a friendly community. But the areas in which free democracy still exists have become smaller each year for nearly a decade.

The freest area on earth is that occupied by the people of the United States and Canada. It happens also to be the richest. It is, moreover, one of the least thickly populated. For these reasons there should be more hope for the uprooted in America than anywhere else. This hope will live so long as Americans maintain their democracy and prize it enough to work for it.

America, as we have seen, is taking its first halting steps towards becoming an organic democracy. We begin to realize that the relationship between the already well-rooted members of American society and those who, for one reason or another are uprooted, must be worked out, not as in the earlier pioneer days by letting each family find for itself its own spot of settlement, but by the most careful social planning. If this re-settlement is left purely to the impulses, desires, whims, delusions or even the most stalwart ambitions of individuals and families, only chaos will ensue. To say this is not to speak theoretically. It has been and is being proved true in countless cases. John Steinbeck's "Grapes of Wrath" is the classic literary statement of the problem, just as "Uncle Tom's Cabin" was the classic statement of the problem of Negro slavery. Follow the Joads through Steinbeck's pages and you follow uprooted humanity, not only in America but in China and Europe, over the whole face of the earth. You will come to see the complexity of the problem and the necessity for intelligent social planning: not merely as a matter of more or less easy reform, but social planning as the rational outcome of an impulse toward basic social redemption.

It is, of course, possible to have a kind of social planning without religion, as in Russia or Germany. There social planning has become a quasi-religion. We, however, in the United States who wish to help create a more Christian society are guardians of a tradition rooted in the Hebrew conception of justice, and given new meaning by Christ's sharper emphasis upon mercy

and individual worth. Out of such religion grows a sense of the unity of all persons, the universal oneness of all. This heightened sensitivity to that which is universal in all affects the attitude towards institutions. Institutions are to be respected only in so far as they serve the ends of universality and help to make life more meaningful for all persons in the world. Thus at length there is matured in the aspiring personality a knowledge of the spiritual depths of organic society; so that the inevitable trend of contemporary civilization from individualistic competition and strife to organic cooperation and orderliness is saved from being merely a trend away from freedom towards tyranny.

Without an understanding and grasp of the spiritual depths of organic society the historic movement of today is bound to end in tyranny. For a closely organized society can only be democratic if and when the persons who make it up are capable of voluntary action for the common good. If they must be coerced then democracy has failed. But spiritual understanding is the only substitute for coercion. Thus the religious person asks of society that it conserve that which is worthy, that it eradicate contemporary evils and that it continuously work out new human patterns in which the individual may grow to his full stature as a son of God.

Faced by so great a challenge to all that is idealistic and daring in human nature, young men and women are being fired by a new enthusiasm. They yearn for a chance to serve their time in significant ways. They become imbued with the old pioneering spirit, but are intelligent enough to know that the pioneer spirit must find fresh modes of expression in accordance with the demand of this revolutionary day. They organize youth movements, they attend "bull sessions," they go to summer conferences. A few, more hardy than the rest, sign up for Work Camps where they pay good money for the privilege of working their heads off in behalf of handicapped communities and underprivileged groups. They give thought to their vocation: what to do with themselves for life in such a time and such a world as this. They learn of new kinds of jobs—

jobs with relatively small pay but great social significance. They get ready to tackle one of these jobs. Soon they feel themselves part of a movement which they do not fully comprehend but which grips and draws them into its current. They yield to this and it satisfies them. Gradually they begin to understand what it means. They develop skills, insights, points of view. They are matured by experience, but as experience matures them they also help to mature the movement so that experience flows to others. They discover possibilities in creative living of which they had never before dreamed. Life takes on new meanings and its meanings come to be the most highly prized possessions of those who live the life. Comradeship develops until it transcends itself and enters the phase of true religion. Existence is transmuted into abundant living, and experience is transformed into a response to further challenge and the pursuit of an objective which is no less than the perfection of personal character in a society as sensitive to personal qualities and needs as is God himself.

In the presence of this challenge and in the light of this objective, the Congregational Christian Churches set up the Council for Social Action. For seven years now we have been at work—for the seven years most pregnant with possibility for good or evil of any seven years, probably, in the history of mankind.

Now, in 1941, civilization is involved in a life and death struggle. What can Christians do in the months ahead? What, specifically, can be done by us of the Congregational Christian Churches?

(Continued on page 26)

WE ARE NOT ALONE

Out of religion grows a belief in the essential unity of all persons, the universal oneness of all and of all with God.

A closely organized society can only be democratic when the individuals who make it up feel this sense of unity and are capable of voluntary action for the common good. Never was this sense of unity so necessary as it is today.

The Council for Social Action was created to assist in the development of individual Christians who feel this sense of unity and who will, if need be, sacrifice personal gain as they cooperate with others in behalf of all mankind. It is this sensitivity which has given the followers of Jesus the power to build a church, to sustain freedom, to acclaim justice.

Today the members of the Council for Social Action invite you to cooperate with us in ventures which will prove that Christian insight — lucid and unafraid — can prepare the way for the republic of righteousness in which all men of good will, of every race and nation, shall inherit the earth.

—ELIZABETH G. WHITING

Copies of the drawing reproduced on the opposite page may be obtained by writing to the Council for Social Action. It is available in two forms: a large poster for use on bulletin boards; and a small leaflet.

We are not alone



**We Worship, We Learn, We Act Together
For the glory of God and in service
to our fellow men**



WHAT ARE OUR IDEALS FOR SOCIETY?

The National Council of Congregational Churches, meeting in Washington, D.C., in 1925, adopted a Statement of Social Ideals. It has remained a landmark in the development of our denomination's conscience with respect to social inequalities and injustices. We can never go back upon the road that led up to its adoption. We must always go forward.

The time seems now to be ripe for a restudy of that Statement of 1925, with the aim of formulating a new Statement setting forth with equal clarity the attitude of our fellowship towards the issues of this present time.

To that end there has been organized a Committee of Thirty-Five to undertake a restudy of the 1925 Statement and to bring a new Statement to the meeting of the General Council at Hanover in June, 1942. The membership of this Committee of

Thirty-Five comprises persons who represent the sharp growing edge of Christian thought. It would be hard to select a more representative group of outstandingly competent Christians. They have been chosen from amongst the large number of able sociologists, economists, publicists, civic leaders, businessmen, labor leaders, theologians, pastors, educators, executives and youth leaders in the denomination.

The Committee is divided functionally into seven sub-committees: on the Political Order, Education, Rural Life, Industrial Relations, Church and Society, Race Relations, and World Order.

One of the important differences between the forming of the 1925 Statement and the casting of the Statement which will be presented at Hanover is that in this latter case an officially constituted Committee of the General Council is set up for the task and has been given more than a year's time in which to develop and mature its findings. The hope is that, when the new Statement has been presented and thoroughly discussed at the meeting of the General Council in 1942, it may be made the basis for discussion and action throughout the whole denomination, even to the last local church. Then finally it may well become the foundation for a great movement amongst Congregational Christians towards a revival of Christian faith and ethics in a form that is related practically to the situation of crisis and challenge in which we live. This is an ambitious hope. But it is only the ambitiously hopeful who can be of any use in these days.

The Committee of Thirty-Five invites each local church to participate in the realization of this hope.



WHAT KIND OF A WORLD DO WE WANT?

Many individuals and organizations are concerned with finding the bases of permanent peace when a new Armistice Day shall proclaim to a weary world that the end has come to the Second World War.

The Christian churches everywhere must make this concern their daily prayer. Individual Christians in America must, through their churches and in collaboration with other groups, study and work to build a world order consistent with Christian principles.

Because of the importance of this question to all church groups, "A Congregational Study of World Organization" is being initiated under the leadership of Dr. Robert L. Calhoun of the Yale Divinity School. Prof. Liston Pope, also of Yale, will act as secretary, and arrangements have been made with the Divinity School for the assistance of a Senior student.

The results of the Study, in which we shall all have an opportunity to participate, will be presented to the General Council meeting in June, 1942.

The Study will be organized around three major areas of thought as follows:

1. The Christian tradition in its bearing on international relations. An effort to discover and define such general Christian principles as make clear the relevance of Christian faith to the quest for world-wide community.
2. Christian judgments, especially within the Congregational Christian tradition and fellowship, concerning the relations of the United States to other nations, before and since the first World War.
3. Economic, political, cultural and other factors that condition every effort to improve international relations or to approach world-wide community.

The International Relations Committee of the Council for Social Action will serve as the link between the leaders of the Study and the local churches. It is hoped that every church in our fellowship will organize a working group which will study the materials prepared and, in turn, make suggestions to the research group.

What can you do?

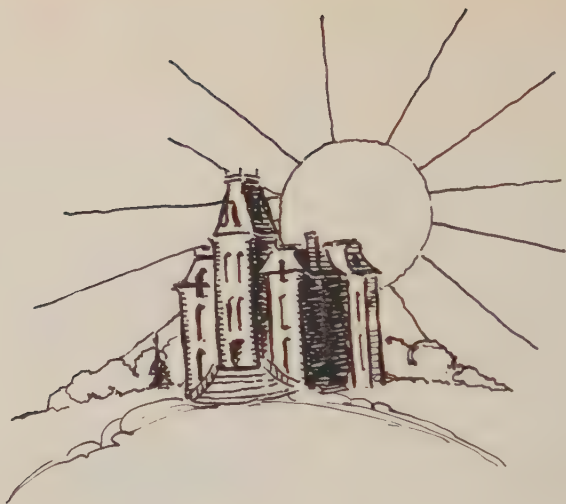
Help to organize a World Order Working Group in your church.

Send for the preliminary packet of materials based on and including the November issue of *Social Action* which is a special reprint of the Foreign Policy Headline Book by Vera M. Dean, with an introductory article by Dr. Calhoun. (Cost of the packet is 35c.)

Place a quantity order for additional copies of the pamphlet.

Send your name to the Office of the Council for Social Action, stating that you wish to receive further materials prepared by our own groups of experts. If possible, enclose a contribution of 25c.-\$1.00, to assist in covering the costs of mimeographing and mailing.

Come to Hanover next June to add your contribution to our discussion there.



OUR RURAL LABORATORY

Merom Institute is located in southwestern Indiana and centers on what was once the campus of a denominational college. The college was closed several years ago, and when Arthur Holt of Chicago heard of this he saw an opportunity to establish a center at Merom for an experiment in every kind of rural and country-town community reconstruction. The old-fashioned type of rugged individualism had failed in this area, as it had failed in ten thousand other similar areas in America. Something had to be done there, just as something has to be done all over the land. So Merom Institute was formed, with a rising young genius, Ferry Platt, as its head. Ferry Platt died untimely; but the thing he started is being carried on with insight, skill and strength under the leadership of Shirley and Ellen Greene. The foresight which Karl Mannheim describes in "Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction," has shown its effects at Merom in the less than ten years of its life. Yet it is somewhat difficult to set down in specific detail precisely how this is shown. One needs to go to Merom and to live there at least a few days in order to imbibe a sense of its importance as an example of modern pioneering in rural and small-town areas.

There is a community laundry at Merom. Housewives drive as far as forty miles each week to take their turn at one of the electric washers. They have community canning at Merom. They have a community concrete mixer. There is a simple organization of farmers and small storekeepers based on principles of mutual help and cooperation. An almost constant succession of Institutes, Conferences, community meetings and adult education gatherings are held at Merom in the re-vamped old Main Building with its high tower and grizzled mansard, or in the fine new auditorium and assembly room. There are concrete "pill box" cabins and bungalows in which to live. There is a gymnasium and skating rink. At the heart of all this is worship—simple, realistic and oriented towards ethical living. The Friends Service Work Camp in the summer of 1940 created a beautiful outdoor center for worship and meditation, and also for pageants and plays. This is called "The John Woolman Center."

Now a further experiment in pioneering is being made at Merom. For the United States government in the spring of 1941 authorized the setting up of one of the Civilian Public Service Camps which have been provided by law for religious conscientious objectors. The Camp has been under way since July, 1941. It was interesting to watch the development of local feeling towards its establishment from sullen hostility to friendly welcome. Most of the farmers and townsfolk in that region have now come to regard the Camp and the boys who are assigned to it with outspoken favor. They are beginning to realize that honest conscientious objectors are really misnamed: that they are not mere objectors to the way of war, but are practical advocates and pioneers of a way of justice, cooperation, and peace.

All of these young men have passed the physical examination for selective service but because of their conscientious objection have been assigned to a Civilian Service Camp to do work of national importance. They have come to the Camp for hard labor with their hands—soil conservation, repairing the effects of erosion, road and bridge repairing, reforestation, and every

kind of program of rural rehabilitation. But they have come for more than manual labor. They have come for study, for training in social leadership, for development of skills such as will be needed for reconstruction all over the world once the war is ended. But even this is not all. They have come in order to learn to live together in a typical American community on the basis of voluntary cooperation and intelligent social planning.

OUR INDUSTRIAL LABORATORY

Another pioneering project in which the Council for Social Action has a special interest is the James Mullenbach Industrial Institute in Chicago. It centers geographically in a wing of the parish hall of the New First Congregational Church on Washington Boulevard, where Frank McCulloch, its Director, has his office. But it ramifies all over the city wherever labor is at work not only producing goods, but organizing to help create the new organic democracy—the new America.

The Mullenbach Institute is frankly devoted to the task of helping democratically-minded Americans, including union members, to see more clearly than ever the real stakes and responsibilities of the labor movement.

In backing up such a movement we feel that we are making an important contribution to the growth of a better world order. For the labor movement, as envisaged by its more far-seeing leaders and members, and as the Council for Social Action interprets it through Frank McCulloch of the Mullenbach Institute, is not limited to nationalistic boundaries. It is a world movement *par-excellence*. It is, in fact, one of the most powerful movements in the world in favor of a political and economic world order based upon democratic justice and good will.

Here, then, is another expression of the spirit of the pioneer in contemporary civilization. The Mullenbach Institute works out towards a world horizon from its center in the heart of that

teeming district in Chicago, where many of the great international Labor Unions have their offices and headquarters. Like Merom Institute, it is engaged in tasks that are not easy to describe in words. One needs to live in the atmosphere of Chicago's labor district; go along with Frank McCulloch on his constant expeditions into the very vortex of industrial life where the power of the labor movement is generated daily and hourly by thought and toil; sit in at the conferences and attend the meetings and forums, and finally become emotionally and morally a part of the thing itself. This is the only way to understand what we are trying to do as our share in giving God-speed to this group of pioneers, that they may play a meaningful part not only in the growth of an organic democracy out of American soil, but in its spread to the soil of Europe, Asia, Africa and all the islands of the sea.





OTHER LABORATORIES OF VOLUNTARY COOPERATION

The Congregational Christian Churches have always ventured into new fields. Colleges, schools, hospitals and churches in every part of the United States, in Africa and Asia, have been the fruit of a creative and daring imagination. The Council for Social Action is but one phase of this will to pioneer and there is a renaissance of this spirit today in every aspect of our life as a denomination. There is hardly a project being carried on under the Board of Home Missions which does not express it. All one needs to do is to take a trip through the South, the Southwest, the Northwest—from South Carolina to New Mexico, from Arizona to Oregon—in order to see with his own eyes the kind of social pioneering in which our Home Boards are engaged. As one becomes familiar with such place-names as Bricks, Cotton Valley, Pleasant Hill, Piedmont, Avery, and a dozen more, he realizes that we Congregational Christians are helping America to prepare for a new day, not through one agency only but through our whole life and strength.

This same realization grows as one learns more of the present program and plans of the American Board. This venerable organization, with more than one hundred years of world-embracing pioneering to its credit, has progressively modernized its outlook and its activities. It is the agency above all others through which our denomination may most effectively work to extend its influence outside the boundaries of America into practically every nook and cranny of the earth's surface. The vigorous and ever revitalized American Board is to Congregational

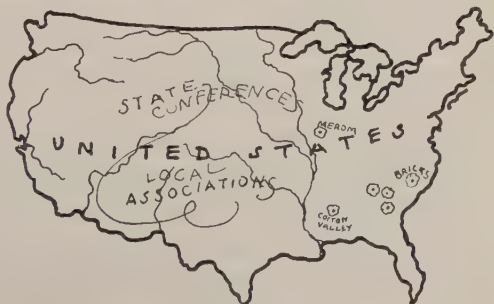
Christians potentially the most important agency for strengthening the bonds of voluntary cooperation on a planetary scale.

The State Conferences also are becoming increasingly aware of the social opportunities of our time, and are sending out their own pioneers—sometimes called Committees for Social Action. From the State Conferences the spirit goes out to the Associations and from the Associations spreads to the local churches. In the local churches it works like a proverbial leaven upon the lives of individuals.

Young People

Amongst our young people this same ferment is spreading, so that practically every phase of Pilgrim Fellowship activity includes the emphasis on social redemption. Today's youth must choose between the pagan gods of selfishness and power, and the God revealed by Jesus. Christian youth are choosing the Christlike God, and this means that they are eagerly looking for ways to serve Him.

The practical effect is to transform the more or less conventional "Young People's Society" into a center of powerful forces urging on towards a new kind of society in a new kind of world. It is true that the dynamics of social change let loose in such centers will at times seem dangerous to older and less vital Christians. But to those who are both older and wiser, and who also have retained the vitality of their Christian idealism, this will seem good. For unless Christian youth are willing to try to build a new kind of society in a new kind of world, there is little to encourage the hope that Christ and His way of life shall ever control the ways of men or order the shape of things to come.





SAFEGUARDS FOR THE DEFENSE PROGRAM

The churches of America are responding to the call for a greatly increased program of community service to three groups of individuals whose lives have been seriously affected by the defense program. 1. The men in training. 2. Those (both men and women) brought together to serve the needs of the camps—mechanics, masons, carpenters, electricians, stenographers, cooks, laundresses, etc.—who in themselves make up a large population. 3. The individuals and families who constitute the bulk of the citizenry collected from everywhere to work in the defense industries and to live as best they may in trailers, tourist camps, private houses, rented rooms, shacks, tenements and sometimes, fortunately, in excellent quarters provided by the Federal Housing Authority. The development of a "sense of community" amongst those thus engaged is a prior obligation of our democracy. Upon the churches falls a large share of the responsibility for creating this "sense of community."

The government has taken the initiative in helping the churches and the allied social agencies and civic organizations

to equip themselves for the task. Under the auspices of the United Service Organizations the religious and social service organizations in America, cooperating with the government, will help plan a kind of community life for those whom the defense program has uprooted, which may be of great importance.

Not even the government and the U.S.O. together, however, can do the work of the churches. This is recognized by most of the leaders in government and by all the responsible officers of the U.S.O. They realize that the religious center in any normal community is also its basic social center. The church, therefore, is potentially the central integrating or community-building force in any significant gathering of population.

But no one denomination is able singly and separately to meet the need. It must be met, on a larger and larger scale, interdenominationally. Recognizing this, the various Protestant denominations have banded together to grapple with the situation cooperatively. The Federal Council of Churches has been at work. So also has the Home Missions Council and the International Council of Religious Education. Added to these is the General Committee on Army and Navy Chaplains and the Christian Commission for Camp Communities and Industrial Defense Areas.

This latter organization seems to be in a strategic position to pioneer in behalf of the churches into the newly opening fields. Its function is to coordinate the work of the denominations and local churches and church councils, in the communities near or adjacent to all army camps, naval stations and air bases, and in the new or suddenly swollen communities growing up around the industrial centers. The job is tremendous, and it can be undertaken only piece by piece, for there is not yet sufficient support for the Commission nor sufficient experience to make possible a completely developed program. But the Congregational Christian Churches will wish to play their full part in its development, both financially and in practical cooperation.

There are camp communities and defense industry areas where no Congregational Christian Church has ever been or-

ganized. Obviously, the only way that we can participate in the work in such communities is through the interdenominational agencies and the Boards of other denominations. We can not place new Congregational Christian Churches wherever camps or defense industries are located. To do so would be wasteful and shortsighted. But we can work out a policy, in consultation with leaders of all denominations and through the Christian Commission for Camp Communities and Industrial Defense Areas, by which our whole relationship with other denominations and with all the agencies engaged in parallel enterprises may be guided. The effect of such far-seeing churchmanship will be as important in the field of social relations as in the realm of personal religion and morals. It will greatly enhance that "sense of community" which is essential both to individual integration and to healthful social interaction in an organic democracy.

OUR MINISTRY IN TIME OF WAR

What can one church do to help millions of people who are hungry and homeless because of war?

What is our denomination doing as its share of the special services to men in our armed forces and for the churches in areas congested by defense industries?

How can the American Board meet the emergency expenses caused by the war?

All conscientious, sympathetic Christians are asking themselves, and each other, these and similar questions. We know, although we cannot see, the unbelievable destruction of lives and property; the disruption of normal living and the dreadful uncertainty that is the fate of so many men and women today. And we cannot forget. We want to keep our local churches strong and our missionary ventures intact. But we want to do more.

Because we cannot do our share unless we organize and cooperate to meet the diverse obligations which the Christian church must meet in time of war, there will be one channel

for giving to emergency needs. The Congregational Christian Committee for War Victims and Services will continue to raise money for the relief of human suffering and will also attempt to raise money for the special services which our churches must render as the defense program affects the lives of thousands of American boys and families.

Each local church in our fellowship should form its Committee for War Victims and Services. It is hoped that at least 10 per cent of the members of each church will agree to make a sacrificial weekly gift to this total, all-inclusive effort of our denomination in this hour of tragedy.

What sum will *you* agree to give each week for a year? How and what will *you* sacrifice in order to make this gift?

No gift is too small to be important. One million members of Congregational Christian Churches sacrificing regularly each week can provide a flood of compassion and loving service to prove that Christ's spirit is still at work in a war-torn world.

For complete information write: Congregational Christian Committee for War Victims and Services, 289 Fourth Avenue, New York, N. Y.



THE STRUGGLE FOR WORLD ORDER

BY VERA MICHELES DEAN

At a time when war rages on three continents, it may seem premature to talk of peace. Yet already the future peace is being forged on the anvil of war. Everywhere, as people fight or prepare to resist, they discuss the changes war may bring, the new order that may emerge out of chaos. This struggle for world order reveals . . . an undying hope that human intelligence, which has proved so effective in extending the frontiers of scientific knowledge, may yet succeed in solving by peaceful means the problems of relations between men and between nations.

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The above excerpt is the opening paragraph of Mrs. Dean's 90-page article which will appear in *Social Action* for November.

Vera Micheles Dean is recognized as a student of world affairs. In "The Struggle for World Order," Mrs. Dean presents concrete facts, makes incisive analyses, and equips one to understand the momentous world changes now under way. Her clear, pungent style also makes good reading.

Pre-publication rates (on orders received *before November 10*) are:

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